

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY IO:MR GALANTO

APPROVED BY IO:MR KAHN

EUR/SOV:MR WILKINSON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION IAEA VIENNA PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 108272

FOLLOWING REPEAT MOSCOW 7552 ACTION STATE INF BONN BRASILIA
GUENOS AIRES CANBERRA CAPE TOWN GENEVA HONG KONG LENINGRAD
LONDON OTTAWA PARIS PEKING ROME TAIPEI TEHRAN TEL AVIV
TOKYO 20 MAY 1974. QUOTE:

S E C R E T MOSCOW 7552

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PARM, TECH, UR, US, IN

SUBJECT: SOVIET REACTIONS TO INDIAN NUCLEAR TEST

FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE GEARED TO LETTERED PARAGRAPHS
OF REFTEL:

A. SOVIET PUBLIC TREATMENT OF INDIAN NUCLEAR TEST
TO DATE HAS BEEN CONFINED TO PASS REPORT IN PRAVDA
AND OTHER CENTRAL PRESS ON MAY 19. ITEM IS BASED ON
INDIAN ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION ANNOUNCEMENT, REPORTING
THAT NUCLEAR DEVICE EXPLODED UNDERGROUND, THAT INDIAN

SCIENTISTS ARE DEVELOPING TECHNOLOGY FOR EXCAVATION
PURPOSES, AND THAT INDIA DOES NOT INTEND MANUFACTURE
NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND CONDEMNS USE ON NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS
FOR MILITARY PURPOSES.

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B. WE BELIEVE USSR UNLIKELY TO REGISTER ANY SIGN

OF PUBLIC DISAPPROVAL OF INDIAN TEST AND WILL FALL BACK ON PROFESSED PEACEFUL PURPOSES IF PRESSED FOR REACTION IN PUBLIC FORUMS. EVEN PRIVATELY SOVIETS WILL PROBABLY CONFINED THEMSELVES TO URGING INDIA TO STAY OUT OF WEAPONS PRODUCTION AND TO REFRAIN FROM ATMOSPHERIC TESTS. THE SOVIETS WILL, OF COURSE, BE PLEASED AT INDIA'S ABILITY TO WALK A BIT TALLER VIS-A-VIS THE CHINESE, BUT WE DOUBT THAT MOSCOW WOULD FAVOR INDIA'S INDEPENDENT DEVELOPMENT OF WEAPONS TO MATCH PRC DELIVERY CAPABILITY. FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES, THE POTENTIAL IS ALMOST AS GOOD AS THE WEAPONS THEMSELVES.

C. INDIAN CAPABILITY IS LIKELY TO HAVE LITTLE IMPACT ON SOVIET NUCLEAR INTENTIONS, BUT THERE WILL PROBABLY BE SOME APPREHENSION ABOUT FURTHER EXPANSION OF THE NUCLEAR CLUB -- IN PARTICULAR, ISRAELI NUCLEAR INTENTIONS. WE WOULD EXPECT THE SOVIETS TO PRESS HARDER THAN EVER FOR GERMAN DEPOSIT OF RATIFICATION FOR NPT, AND POSSIBLY TO URGE THE JAPANESE TO RATIFY. IT IS DIFFICULT TO ASSESS THE IMPACT ON SOVIET READINESS TO MOVE AHEAD IN LIMITING UNDERGROUND TESTS, BUT WE WOULD NOT EXPECT INDIA'S WISHES TO GET MUCH WEIGHT IN FINAL SOVIET DECISION.

D. SOVIETS WILL PROBABLY BE ONLY TOO HAPPY TO SEE U.S. PLAY DISAPPROVING ROLE, PERHAPS PRIVATELY TELLING US THAT MOSCOW IS HAPPY TO SEE US STICKING UP FOR NON-PROLIFERATION. THE TOUGHER OUR STANCE, THE BETTER IT WILL SERVE SOVIET INTERESTS IN SETTING PRECEDENT TO BE APPLIED IN EVENT OF FUTURE TESTS BY ISRAEL OR OTHERS (AND IN COMPLICATING OUR RELATIONS WITH INDIA). WE DO NOT BELIEVE A RELATIVELY SOFT U.S. POSTURE TOWARD INDIA WOULD RAISE ANY GREAT APPREHENSION AMONG SOVIETS, SINCE IN NUCLEAR MATTERS THEIR OWN LEVERAGE MAY BE GREATER THAN OUR OWN. THEY WOULD HAVE CAUSE FOR CONCERN ONLY IN UNLIKELY EVENT THAT OUR REACTION WERE Milder THAN THEIR OWN.
STOESSEL

UNQUOTE RUSH

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